

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT BEIRUT 6549 ACTION SECSTATE INFO SIT-REP COLL
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QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 6549

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION JULY 23: PALESTINIAN/SYRIAN TALKS
BEGIN; ARAB LEAGUE HOPES EXPAND LOCAL DEPLOYMENT;
FIGHTING LULL CONTINUES

REF: BEIRUT 6514

1. SUMMARY: PALESTINIAN DELEGATION IN DAMASCUS MEETS
KHADDAM AND MILITARY LEADERS. TALKS TO CONTINUE JULY 23.
REJECTIONISTS BACK IN BEIRUR REAFFIRM OPPOSITION TO TALKS.
AL DEPUTY KHOLI CONTINUES CONTACTS, SAYS HE HOPES AL FORCE
DEPLOYMENTS CAN BE EXPANDED TO OTHER HOT SPOTS IN ADDITION
TO MUSEUM CROSSING POINT, WHICH STILL HOLDING.. CHAMOUN
INVITES FOREIGN EMBASSIES TO MOVE TO EAST BEIRUT. JUNBLATT
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ANNOUNCES CREATION OF CENTRAL POLITICAL COUNCIL OF

LEFTIST PARTIES, BUT NOT TO INCLUDE PALESTINIANS. BATTLE OF NABAA BEGINNING TO HEAT UP, AS ARMENIANS INCREASINGLY DRAWN INTO FIGHTING AGAINST PALESTINIANS AND LEFTISTS. ICRC WILL AGAIN ATTEMPT CONVOY FROM WEST BEIRUT TO TELL ZAATAR JULY 23. SOME MINOR CHRISTIAN FORWARD MOVEMENT ON GROUND IN METN REPORTED, AS PALESTINIAN STRENGTH IN AREA REPORTED VERY LOW. LULL CONTINUES IN OTHER AREAS. END SUMMARY.

2. PALESTINIAN DELEGATION TO DAMASCUS LED BY FAROUK KADDOUMI MET JULY 22 WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM AND SYRIAN MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS. PUBLICLY, KADDOUMI SAYS DISCUSSIONS "SATISFACTORY" AND HADDAM DESCRIBES "FRATERNAL AND TOTALLY SINCERE ATMOSPHERE," BUT OTHER ACCOUNTS CHARACTERIZE INITIAL MEETING AS ACRIMONIOUS. DISCUSSIONS SCHEDULED CONTINUE JULY 23. HOWEVER, REJECTIONIST FRONT ISDTVS STATEMENT EXPRESSING RESERVATIONS ON REBUILDING BRIDGES WITH "THE CONSPIRATOR REGIME OF DAMASCUS" WHILE SYRIAN TROOPS REMAIN IN LEBANON. REJECTIONISTS SAY THEY OPPOSED SENIDNG DELEGATION TO DAMASCUS AND WILL NOT BE BOUND BY ANY AGREEMENTS COMING OUT OF VISIT. STATEMENT SUGGESTS NEW DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT, IN SPITE OF LAST WEEK'S GENERAL MEETINGS IN WHICH ARAFAT CONFERRED WITH REJECTIONIST LEADERS INCLUDING GEORGE HABASH. NEVERTHELESS, LACK OF REPETITION BY PALESTINIANS OR LEFTISTS IN LAST TWO DAYS OF DEMANDS FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL IS PERHAPS SIGNIFICANT.

3. AL REPRESENTATIVE HASSAN SABBRI KHOLI JULY 22 MET WITH CAMILLE CHAMOUN, PIERRE GEMAYEL AND SULEIMAN FRANJIEH AND MADE OPTIMISTIC STATEMENTS ON FUTURE AL INITIATIVE. KHOLI SAYS POSITIONING OF AL FORCES IN NATIONAL MUSEUM SECTOR SERVES AS EXAMPLE WHICH AL NOW HOPES GENERALIZE, PLACING CONTINGENTS AT ALL HOT POINTS AND ACHIEVING GENERAL CEASEFIRE. KHOLI SAYS AL WILL POSITION CONTINGENT NEAR PALACE OF JUSTICE ON RIGHTIST SIDE GREEN LINE WITHIN FEW DAYS. PRESS SAYS CHRISTIANS HAVE AGREED. HOWEVER, WE UNDERSTAND ACTIVITIES AL IN BEIRUT NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY RIGHTIST AND PERHAPS CONFIDENTIAL

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ALSO BY LEFTIST LEADERSHIP. THEY MAY SIMPLY EXPECT AL TO PROVE ITSELF INADEQUATE. WE UNDERSTAND BARGAINING POSITIONS OF BOTH SIDES THREATEN ENTIRE BUFFER ZONE CONCEPT AS NO GROUP REALLY PREPARED GIVE UP TERRITORY. FIVE MEMBERS OF AL CONTINGENT IN MUSEUM AREA WOUNDED BY SNIPER AND MORTAR FIRE ON JULY 22. AL FORCE COMMANDER GENERAL GHONEIM RESPONDED TO MURABITOUN INTERFERENCE WITH ORIGINAL JULY 21 AL

DEPLOYMENT JUST EAST OF CONFRONTATION LINE BY VISIT TO MURABITOUN LEADER QULAYLAT JULY 22 AND ASSURANCES THAT "FREE ZONE" WILL EXTEND INTO CHRISTIAN AREA AS FAR AS PALACE OF JUSTICE.

4. CAMILLE CHAMOUN AGAIN ASSERTS ROLE AS FOREIGN MINISTER BY INVITATION TO DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS TO MOVE TO EASTERN ZONE. CHAMOUN SAYS "SECURITY AND TRANQUILITY" OF EAST PROVIDES "CLIMATE PERMITTING DIPLOMATS TO PURSUE THEIR ACTIVITIES." SOURCE CLOSE TO JUNBLATT INDICATES THAT PERE MOURBARAK IS SEEKING ARRANGE MEETINGS OF JUNBLATT WITH PIERRE GEMAYEL AND CAMILLE CHAMOUN.

5. DE FACTO PARTITION TAKES ANOTHER STEP WITH KAMAL JUNBLATT ANNOUNCEMENT OF CREATION OF CENTRAL POLITICAL COUNCIL OF NATIONAL MOVEMENT, WHICH WILL NOT, AS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED, INCLUDE PALESTINIANS. COUNCIL COMPOSED OF 12 REPRESENTATIVES OF "PROGRESSIVE PARTIES AND GROUPS" AND SIX INDEPENDENTS. INTENDED TO REGULATE PUBLIC LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION, COUNCIL PLANNED BECOME OPERATIONAL IN TWO WEEKS. JUNBLATT SAYS COUNCIL NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR STATE'S PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION BUT TRANSITORY NECESSITY DUE BREAKDOWN OF ADMINISTRATION IN CURRENT CRISIS AND WILL FUNCTION ONLY UNTIL FORMATION OF A SIMILAR GROUP BASED ON PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.

6. COMBAT CONTINUES AT NABAA WHERE GROUND FIGHTING AS WELL AS BOMBARDMENTS. KATAEB RADIO SAYS AREAS OF MERHECHE, TRAD AND SIS ON OUTSKIRTS OF NABAA NOW UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE. ARMENIANS OF NEIGHBORING BOURJ HAMMOUD AGAIN EMBROILED WITH PALESTINIANS/LEFTISTS. KATEAB RADIO SAYS ARMENIANS OF TACHNAK PARTY HAVE ATTEMPTED TAKE OVER COMMUNIST PARTY HEADQUARTERS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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NABAA AND HAVE TAKEN SEVERAL PALESTINIANS HOSTAGE IN EFFORT PRESSURE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITIES TO HALT SNIPER ACTIVITY ON ARMENIAN AREA. SHIITE RESIDENTS OF NABAA REPORTEDLY ALSO HAVE PROTESTED TO IMAM MUSA SADR AGAINST ARMENIAN "INTERVENTION." IN NEARBY TELL ZAATAR SPORADIC FIGHTING CONTINUES. ICRC SAYS IT WILL MAKE ANOTHER ATTEMPT JULY 23 TO RUN CONVOY FROM WEST BEIRUT TO TELL ZAATAR. IN ADDITION TO FIGHTING IN AREA, HEAVILY DAMAGED CONDITION OF ROAD ACROSS "NO MAN'S LAND," SOME 700 METERS WIDE, MAY HINDER CONVOY.

7. WE UNDERSTAND LIMITED GROUND MOVEMENT OF CHRISTIAN TROOPS HAS BEGUN IN METN. NUMBERS OF PALESTINIAN FIGHTERS REMAINING IN METN VERY LOW, ONE SOURCE SAYS ONLY 300. IN THE HIGH METN EXCHANGES OF ARTILLERY FIRE

CONTINUE BETWEEN BOIS DE BOULOGNE, BECHLAMA, AINTOURA,
MTEIN, MROUJE AND BASKINTA.

8. LULL CONTINUES IN BEIRUT ALTHOUGH FIRING BECAME
HEAVIER ALONG CONFRONTATIMN LINE AS NIGHT FELL JULY 22.
SNIPERS VERY ACTIVE IN MANY AREAS. GROUND SITUATION
STATIC ELSEWHERE. ALEY/KAHALE CONTINUE EXCHANGE
INTERMITTENT BOMBARDMENTS. SOUTH IS CALM EXCEPT FOR
REPORTS OF FATAH AMBUSHES AGAINST SYRIAN TROOPS IN
JEZZINE AREA.
SEELYE UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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